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**Life Subscription : Rs. 500/- Annual Subscription : Rs. 40/- Price per copy : Rs. 10/-**

*The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are the writer's own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editor / Publisher.*

*It may please be noted that articles sent to SHANMUKHA for publication will not be returned.*

Printed and Published by Shri S. Seshadri on behalf of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.) and Printed at Sevak Press, B-1, Shalimar Industrial Estate, Matunga Labour Camp, Mumbai - 400 019 and Published from Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Plot No. 292, Comrade Harbanslal Marg, Sion (East), Mumbai - 400022. Editor : Shri P. N. Krishnamoorthy. Registered with Registrar of Newspapers for India. R. N. No. 27938/75



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### IN FOCUS

The first article in this issue refers to the various compositions of Tyagaraja related to Lord Krishna. The second article refers to a rare krithi of Tyagaraja with a very informed interpretation of the krithi. The third article relates to some great names in the history of South India whose principal contribution solicitude for fellow human beings. A timely reminder to the music fraternity of the history and significance of the concept of Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi constitutes the next article. This is followed by a scholarly expose of the raga Kedaragaula which typifies the adage 'change is the only permanent thing in this world'. The next article relates to the role of music in Bharatanatyam. The healing powers of music in a higher plane is dealt with in the next article. A brief obit on Khanjira Vidwan, H.P. Ramachar is also featured. A review of the cultural scene in Mumbai and an elaborate review of the publication on the contributions of Paramacharya to music and allied arts are to be seen at the end of this issue. □



## TYAGARAJA ON SRI KRISHNA

by V. Sivaramakrishnan

The Ishta Devata of Saint Tyagaraja (1767 – 1847) was undoubtedly Sri Rama. He asks: "You, (my) favourite deity, and Tyagaraja – are they different? (*Syamasundaranga – Dhanyasi*). In another song, he identifies Sri Rama as the Paramatman. He finds Sri Rama as the essence of the Upanishad "Mahavakya" "*Tat tvam asi*" – Thou art That (*Tattva meruga tarama – Garudadhvani*). Finally, he admits his difficulty in finding another God like Sri Rama: "Oh Rama! After deep reflection, I see it is impossible for me to find another God like you. If one wants to sing, one must sing of you alone; if one wants a companion, it must be you alone. I know your heart now" (*Neevanti Daivamu – Bhairavi*).

Like a true devotee of God, Tyagaraja sings about other gods as well. Not only has he sung in adoration of the deities of the place of his residence, Panchanadeeshwara and Dharma Samvardhani, he has portrayed in exquisite phrases the deities of Kanchi, Tiruvotriyur, Kovur, Tirupati, Srirangam, Lalgudi, Nagapattinam and other places, mostly in Tamil Nadu. That he is no fanatic is borne out by the popular piece "*Sogasugamridanga*" in *Sri Ranjani*. It is the spirit of the Upanishads, he says, that needs to be brought out in one's song of adoration.

"Where is that great man who, to the accompaniment of mridanga and tala, makes you delight and adores you with

songs which have words that convey the true spirit of the Upanishads (*Nigama Shirorthamu*) have correctness of the notes, rhythmic pauses, true devotion, dispassion, simplicity and elegance and the nine rasas? Is it possible for Tyagaraja to do it?"

Tyagaraja reserves a special place for Sri Krishna. Forgetting Him would mean deviating from the righteous path and lapsing into vices. This an interesting viewpoint as Sri Krishna is popularly associated with fun and frolic, stealing and killing, why, even dallying with countless women; Tyagaraja affirms his faith in Sri Krishna in '*Enta nerchina*' in *Udayaravichandrika : Suddha Dhanyasi*.

"One, who has not bestowed constant thought on the right path that is after the heart of the Lord of Lakshmi, however learned, however extensive his pilgrimage, and however great he may be, is bound to become a slave to women. Such a one is liable to get addicted to vices like cruelty to others, coveting others' women and wealth, slandering others, living upon others and uttering lies."

Krishna Bhakti, as Tyagaraja sees it, is the anodyne for the pain that a cruel world inflicts on us.

The sight of Haridasas singing the glories of Hari, Govinda, Narahari, Rama, Krishna (*Haridasalu - Yamunakalyani*) fills him with supreme joy. He appeals to Narada, "the honey-bee in the lotus of


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Nada", and friend of Sri Krishna, to save him. (*Sri Narada - Kaanada*). The Kriti 'Naradaguruswami' (*Darbar*) also contains many poetic fancies that exalt the guru who prefers to live in the hearts of saint-singers. Tyagaraja looks upon Narada as his guru.

'*Hari Yanuvani*' (*Todi*) re-affirms Tyagaraja's faith in devotion to Sri Krishna. He mentions Suka as one who has His holy feet ever in his heart.

In that gem of a song, '*Samaja vara gamana*' (*Hindolam*) Tyagaraja describes Sri Krishna as the "beacon-light of Nada". (There is a peculiar appropriateness in hailing Sri Krishna this way; was he not the charmer with His flute?). The song is rich in its meaning: "Oh bewitching Lord, shining like a beacon light on the mountain of Nada of seven swaras born of the Pranava, which is the source of all Vedanta. One adept in the nectar - like music born of Sama Veda. Oh You, who resorted to the Yadava race, who delighted in the playing of the flute, protect me. Oh Lord of magnificent gait, the sun who makes the lotus of good men's heart blossom! Oh celebrated Lord who transcends me".

Tyagaraja taunts Sri Krishna in one piece (*Adigi Sukhamu - Madhyamavati*). "Who has ever enjoyed happiness by asking you for it, O Lord ... Devaki desired to enjoy the plays and pranks of a son, you let Yashoda have them. To attain the Lord, Gopis had to give up their lords (husbands)."

Tyagaraja reserved for exclusive depiction of Sri Krishna his verse play '*Nauka Charitram*' (*Naukaa Charitramu*) taking his cue, perhaps, from Jayadeva's

'Gitagovindam'. He describes Sri Krishna as taking the Gopis on a boat ride in the river Yamuna. He humbles the pride of the Gopis by asking them to plug the leaks in the boat with their clothes! 'Even in handling such a delicate theme, he does not transgress the limits of propriety or decorum', says Prof. William J. Jackson of Indiana University, Indianapolis, U.S.A., in his introduction to the English translation of "Naukaa Charitramu."

"In the Naukaa Charitramu and in his other works, we can see how Tyagaraja's genius valued and gathered pre-existent strands, and by re-weaving them into classical music and poetry, gave viable elements of ancient Hinduism a new yet traditional dress to wear in modern world."

The women (though wanting the Lord to be with them) ask: "You are just a small boy, this boat is so heavy; O moon-faced child, have you the might to move it?" (*it - the silver boat*).

Sri Krishna answers: "Without me can even a straw stir? From time immemorial the Vedas and Sastras have been announcing this - have you not heard? To govern and protect creatures in the manner of Lord Hari ..."

And then: *This is just a river, isn't it; An ocean is not seen - well; Doesn't Madhava cause people, gods and titans; To cross the ocean of existence O pearls?*

Tyagaraja was no less a devotee of Sri Krishna than he was of Sri Rama. □

(The translations are based on the English and Tamil versions respectively of the late Shri C. Ramanujachari and Shri T. S. Parthasarathy).

## ASHTALAKSHMIS AMONG THYAGARAJA KRITHIS

by P.K. Srinivasan

Many would be surprised to hear that amongst Thyagaraja's innumerable compositions, there is one Krithi in praise of Ashtalakshmi. This surprise is due to the fact that this Krithi is not so familiar. Moreover, being set to the 2nd Melakarta Ragam and hence a little unwieldy to handle, this song does not find a place in concerts or even in the confines of a home. This beautiful Krithi set to Adi Talam is in the Sanskrit language, possessing just one charanam. Following are the lyrics of this composition.

Ragam : Ratnangi

Talam : Adi

### Pallavi

Kalasavardhini jaam sathatham bhaje  
Kamalalochanaam Sri Ramaam maam

### Anupallavi

Kalabha gaamineem karibhir sritham  
Kamala naabha hrid-kamala sthitham

### Charanam

Kamaneeya jaya-dhana-dhaanya roopam  
Kanakaadhi dhairya lakshmi roopam  
Kamalaam mahaa santhana roopam  
Kamalaalayam Thyagaraja moksha roopam

Among many hidden treasures in the ocean of Thyagaraja Krithis there are still many, which are not explored by many. These rare Krithis which are full of meaning and devotion (which is usual in all the Saint's Krithis) are to be presented by great Vidwans to the ever curious rasikas. Presented here is a searching write-up on the above Krithi.

The references to *Ashtalakshmi* in this Krithi are analysed as follows:

### AADHILAKSHMI

The pallavi lines would translate as: "I eternally meditate on Lakshmi otherwise known as Ramaa, the Lotus-eyed one, who appeared from the ocean of milk". The Lakshmi Avatara has been mentioned right



at the beginning. Going by the famous line "Lakshmeem Ksheera Samudra Raja Thanayaam", Lakshmi appeared while the ocean of milk was being churned for nectar, hence she is the very beginning of creation – Aadhilakshmi.

### GAJALAKSHMI

In the Anupallavi, Thyagaraja describes what happened after the Lakshmi Avatara.

The Anupallavi lines mean : "worship Lakshmi, with the beautiful tread of a baby elephant, the one who is surrounded by elephants and who resides in the heart of Padmanabha".

As soon as Lakshmi appeared from the ocean of milk, her 'Swayamvara' was conducted. Prior to this, the holy ritualistic bath, took place. Elephants from all the eight directions performed Abhishekam on her using gold 'Kalasams' (containers);

*Tasyaa: aasanam aaninyee*

*Mahendraa mahathatbytham*

*Moorthimathyaa: samthsreshtaa:*

*Hema kumbhair jalam soochi*

*Thado pishichur deevim*

*Sreeyam padmakaraam shteem*

*Thik isaa: poorna kalasai:*

*Sooktha vaakyair dwijejnithai:*

*(Bhagavatham, 8th Skandam)*

In the lines from the Sri Sthuthi, Sri Vedanta Desikan portrays elephants performing the "Abhishekam" in the presence of Narayana, while Indra was consecrating the throne.

### Appreciation of lyrics

She (Lakshmi) came in the midst of the assembled Devas, garland in hand to choose her husband. Each, Deva felt that the garland was meant for himself. At that moment Lakshmi – the embodiment of beauty went straight to Vishnu and placed the garland around his neck. Vishnu then gave her a place in his 'Vakshasthala', thus earning the name of the Lord whose chest is the abode of "Alarmel Mangai".

All these incidents are portrayed by Sri Thyagaraja in the Anupallavi. In the first part, he mentions Lakshmi, as Gajalakshmi surrounded by elephants and in the second part he describes how Lakshmi gains a place for herself in Vishnu's "Vakshasthalam", after the Swayamvaram. Here the usage of 'Kalabagaamini' to address Lakshmi is very apt. If elephants surround her without any fear, it is only because she herself has adopted the walk of an elephant. The elephants seeming to lament that they themselves do not have such a beautiful tread, apparently feel that at least by watching her, they will be capable of emulation. Instead of using the terms 'Hamsagaamini' or 'Mandagaamini', the impression of Kalaba Gaamini has been used to enhance the inner meaning of the line.

### JAYALAKSHMI – DHANALAKSHMI – DHAANYALAKSHMI

Thyagaraja concludes the krithi with references to the six other forms of Lakshmi in the charanam. In the first line, he refers to Lakshmi as one having Jaya-Dhana-Dhaanya (Victory, Money, Riches).

The interest in this lies in the use of the term 'Kamaneeya'. 'Kamaneeya' signifies that which is very much liked or desired by mankind. Is not the entire human race fond of Jaya-Dhana-Dhaanya? Thus Thyagaraja has very aptly used the phrase "Kamaneeya Jaya-Dhana-Dhaanya Roopam".

### DHAIRYALAKSHMI

In the charanam's second line, Thyagaraja portrays Lakshmi as courage (Dhairyam) itself, through the words 'Dhairya Lakshmi Roopam'. When courage is present, wealth automatically follows. Hence the joint description "Kanakaadhi Dhairyalakshmi Roopam".

### SANTHANALAKSHMI

In the charanam's third line, he meditates on Santhanalakshmi. Nobody would like to beget wicked or foolish progeny since Santhanalakshmi bestows name and fame on the progeny of those who worship her. Sadguru Thyagaraja highlights these qualities through the appellation "Maha Santhana Roopam".

### MOKSHALAKSHMI

Being the embodiment itself of 'Satvaguna', Sri Thyagaraja while worshipping Lakshmi, needs no boons from 'Varalakshmi'. His sole aim is to

attain Moksha. The concluding line "Thyagarajaaya Moksha Roopaam".

### Significance of Raga Ratnangi

'Ratnakara' is one of the Sanskrit names meaning 'sea'. Here, it signifies one who carries jewels of immeasurable value. It is known that Lakshmi is the one who emerged from this sea fully adorned with these jewels. Moreover, Lakshmi has told Rukmini that she eternally resides amongst jewels:

*"Yaanesu Kanyaashu Vibhushaneshu  
Yegneshu Meykeyshu Shavrishti Matsu  
Vaasani Pullasu Padminireshu  
Nakshatra Veedheeshu Shasaaradheeshu"*

*(Mahabharata – Anusasarpaparvam –  
32nd Adhyayam, Dhanadarma Parvam)*

This Krithi on Lakshmi, composed in his individual style by Saint Thyagaraja, aptly set in Raga Ratnangi represents the peak of 'Rasaanubhava'. As mentioned earlier, the difficulty in manipulating the swaras like Shuddha Rishabha, Gandhaara, Dhaivatha should not cause performers to ignore this Krithi.

I conclude in the hope that Vidwans will sing this little Krithi laden with meaning and 'Rasa', thereby giving joy to the rasikas. □

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## SOLICITUDE by 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Solicitude is among the noblest of golden virtues that cognizes neither barriers nor limits of quantum, occasion, time or space. Hearts of noble souls melt at the sight of living beings in wants, hunger or distress and rush to render immediate succour, though modern trends tend to lead humanity in the reverse direction. It is the finest of fragrant graces that God has invested in human beings, even in animals, and it has to be cherished and fostered, augmented and immortalized. Enlightened organizations and individuals extend unqualified help in the fields of spiritual realization, relief from hunger and stress, education and medicine, arts and crafts. The few cases of selfish misled inhuman behaviour should not detract the merit of the service of hundreds. Society has a duty to salute their labours, if it is unable to participate, in tune with the dictum of the Bard of Ettayapuram

*Nidhi ullavar porkuvai taareer*

*Nidhi illaadavar sila kaasugal taareer*

*Adhavum illaadavar aadharavu taareer*

Hundreds of choultries scattered like stars on blue skies, dished out until recently food and shelter to the wayfarer, the poor and the hungry with solicitude. The abundance of these charities whipped up the enthusiasm of Bharati to hail, 'Bharat, rich in providing alms [anna dhaanattile]'. The national poet went on a crusade further to warn the Universe, '*Tani oruvanukku unavillaiyenil, jagattinai azhithiduvom*' – 'If a single person goes without food, we shall destroy the world'. The selfless crusader knew not the existence of wants in his own home but would not tolerate distress in others. Solicitude reached the pinnacle of its divine grace and glory in that oration. Many of the charities did not even bear the names of the philanthropists respecting the dictum, 'What the right hand gives, the left hand shall not be aware of'. Transient politicians in power boasting shamelessly of service when something is done at the cost of public funds, with eyes on some invisible gains is a recent phenomenon in Bharat. This should only help us in identifying selfless action, since the milk of solicitude should never dry up. We resurrect, as specimen, the lives of a select few who had enriched the practice.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Vallalar Sri Ramalinga Swamigal** of **Vadalur** [1823 – 1874] lit up the spiritual lamp of solicitude, '*Arut perum jyoti*' and started a community kitchen at Vadalur to provide food for all. The *Jyoti* burns bright still and the stoves in the kitchen kindled in 1867 continue to be active! He was not rich but the affluence of his heart was immense. His singular assets were undiluted 'Compassion and Solicitude'. His



heart was large enough to be attracted even by the sight of withering crops. Lamented venerable Vallalar, 'Vaadiya payirai kanumbodellam, en ullam vadiyadu'. If J. C. Bose were alive he would embrace him heartily. The tender solicitous grace of Vallalar shall be clear from the following code he rigourously practiced and relentlessly preached:

"Every time I saw crops withering,  
I withered too, as often!  
As I saw hungry destitute beggars,  
I too fainted with hunger!!  
The defeat of the meritorious  
has made me wilt in pain!!!  
My life must cease when my  
compassion dies!!!!"

He was not a power-hunting individual to vomit such lofty thoughts of pure fragrance without personal involvement. He lived the life of a recluse himself and implemented everyone of the above in thought, speech and deed, in tune with the undying heritage of Bharat.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Upanishad Brhmam Yogin** of Kanchipuram [c. 1751 C.E.] started an open kitchen [feeding house] at Agastyeswaram but with a commanding rider that it was to help spiritual enlightenment and elevation of the soul of the beneficiary. He has left a number of songs full of devotional fervour. Declared he:

"I have flown the flag of devotional singing and spiritual endeavours here.

**Let everyone come, sing devotional songs [tarangas] of mine as well as others.**

*The food offered at this Ashram is not for the momentary satisfaction of physical hunger. It is to ensure the everlasting bliss."*

'Sevikku unavu; pinnar vayitrukku konjam eeyappadum' – 'Food for the ears and the Soul first; then the needs of the belly shall be taken care of' was the motto to ensure a spiritual and intellectual advancement while providing charity. The legacy of Bharat gave prime attention admittedly to the advancement of the Soul – Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Gopala Krishna Bharati** of Narimanam [1811 – 1881] was orphaned while yet a boy and was practically at the mercy of the Lord. Born with a mission to fulfill, he toiled, learnt languages and music. An ardent devotee of Sri Nataraja, the Cosmic Lord, he has left alluring songs of celestial charm and exquisite excellence, which are now the chosen food of musicians, actors and dancers. Who can forget his songs like :

*Eppo Varuvaro [Khamas  
now popular in Jonpuri]  
Tiruvadi Charanam [Kambhoji]  
Natanamadinar [Vasanta]  
Sabhapatikku Veru Deivam [Abhogi] etc.*

The first song would bring back happy memories of the absorbing rendition of Madurai Mani Ayyar, the second of Musiri

Subrahmanya Ayyar, the third the brilliant *Abhinaya* of Dhananjayan and so on. But Bharati remained a bachelor taking rest on the pials of others' houses and left his precious earnings *untouched* for helping marriages of poor girls, helping *Upanayanams* and charities at the temples at Mayuram and Chidambaram. He had declared, 'Prepare food as stipulated, offer it to the Lord and distribute it to the needy'. Revered Dr. U. Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar had dwelt on this superb conduct of Bharati, who authored the Tamil opera 'Nandanar', the Saivite Apostle. This drama was the theme, giving life to two films and thousands of dramas before Independence spreading equality, fraternity and divinity. The charities had disappeared swallowed by vandalism of time. He toiled to help others as Bharat had demonstrated in many a life. Sacrifice is *sine qua non* for bonafide solicitude and service.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Annadhana Sivan**, born in 1852 at Tepperumanallur near Kumbakonam was one who had fed millions of people with solicitude at festivals and other occasions. He could not stand a hungry stomach in others. No wonder he was hailed as 'Anna Dhana Sivan'. 'You may like, to appreciate his service, through some data on basic materials he got for one massive feeding at one festival. Firewood 100 carts; brooms two carts, etc., Many a large-hearted rich eagerly awaited his nod to supply the needs for feeding since he enjoyed such heights of dedicated, *Nishkama* service, stature, image and

integrity all under the divine umbrella of solicitude to the needy, the hungry, the poor and the pilgrim. He lived the life of a wisdom-soaked ascetic. He was great without a peer in the field of feeding others and in relieving hunger. One is yet to be born to excel him.

\*\*\*\*\*

This trend of solicitude in Bharat went to such [distressing!] extremes as to pray for kindness to the enemy, '*Pahaivanukku arulvai*' – 'Lord, pray, help the enemy'. 'Enemy, sure he is on the battlefield but not as a human being in the excellence of God's creation'. This is in accord with the superlative spirit of the *Adwaita* philosophy of Adi Sankara! How great, grand and graceful! This is highlighted in the practice followed in a temple, alluded to in one of the lectures of venerable Sri Paramacharya of Kanchi thus :

"There is a temple dedicated to Devi Annapurneswari at Cherukunnam in Kerala. Every devotee visiting the temple is provided with food. The tradition is that in the night, after all are fed, a packet of food is tied to a branch of the tree in front of the temple. The idea behind this practice is that even the thief prowling in the night shall not go with a stomach that is empty! How could Goddess Annapurneswari, Mother of Creation, stand Her children, however bad they may be going hungry? The Mother's noble instinct of *Nishkama* solicitude is highlighted. Bharat held out such



noble virtues and to a very large extent practised it. There is need to resurrect such noble virtues which are slowly being lost under extraneous influences."

This reference to the above allusion by Sri Paramacharya is apt to remind one of his laudable and lavish *Karuna Kataksham* for the devout, the poor and the needy and his immense love of arts, particularly music and musicians. It is well known that the sage leading a personal life of an ascetic was an apostle of solicitude. He equipped Dr. M. S. Subbulakshmi with the song 'Maitreem Bhajata' extolling universal love and peace to be sung at the United Nations. He remained supreme, unconquered by men or material during his full span of a hundred years, but chaste music lured him being an ardent *Nada Upasaka*. He would join as maestros sang before him as *Nada Samarpan*. He was a *Vainika*. He held special conferences in arts including

*Tevaram, Tiruppavai, Tiruvempavai* and all folk arts.

February 13th, 2006 was the 100th anniversary of his ascending the august Kanchi Sankara Peetham. To celebrate the memorable and happy occasion, Sri Mahaswami Peetarohana Shatabdi Mahotsava Trust, Mumbai took massive and magnificent steps not only to recall and adore the monumental services of the Saint but also to propagate his immense love of humanity and universal solicitude. A celebration of this noble kind spanning a full year enjoys a specific goal and an intended achievement. Let us pray that the concerted endeavours of the august Trust will usher in a rejuvenated renaissance in the spiritual, cultural and social fabric of Bharat that ends the multi-sided maladies the nation is suffering from. May solicitude to the orphan, the brilliant youth, the learned, the *Nishkama* worker and others of grace and integrity, and such flowers of fragrance blossom forth restoring the majestic glory of Bharat! □

#### ERRATA

The April - June '06 issue featured an article "The Twain Shall Meet", the manuscript of which received by us, did not bear the author's name, nor could we trace the source of this article. Nevertheless as it made interesting reading, we presented this as a "contributed article". Subsequently after the issue was out, it was brought to our notice, that this was a lecture presented by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa during the 6<sup>th</sup> All India FAS Music Conference (2004) on "Hindustani Classical and Carnatic Music - Interaction for Musical Enrichment". The error is regretted.

#### RAGAM, TANAM, PALLAVI

by M.B. Vedavalli

The terms Ragam, Tanam, Pallavi are familiar to every one in the music field. The unique features of this item which has necessitated our ancestors to include it as one of the compulsory items and the tradition of which is continued even now by some of the musicians is the main reason for its popularity.

About 100 years ago, Pallavi exposition or the exposition of Ragam, Tanam, Pallavi was considered an important item in a concert (it is only in this item that all the aspects of Manodharma Sangita are covered). Therefore a major portion of the concert was taken up only for Pallavi exposition by musicians.

But now Pallavi exposition is losing its significance. It has become casual, taking about 10 to 15 minutes or sometimes it is even dispensed with. The reasons for this are many :

1. The concerts held now are mostly of short duration, and therefore sufficient time is not available for Pallavi exposition.
2. Secondly, a change in the taste of the audience especially of the younger generation to listen to newer compositions of lighter nature.
3. Thirdly, lack of knowledge among the young students in the intrinsic merits of the exposition of Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi.

Now it is our responsibility to revive

the art which we have inherited and to preserve it for posterity.

Though the origin of all aspects of Manodharma Sangita may be traced to the ancient period, it is during the modern period in the history of music that the exposition of Pallavi was systematized.

Pachimiriam Adiyappiah belonging to the latter half of 18th century, who was the guru of Syama Sastri is said to have perfected RTP, and during the subsequent period many musicians specialized in the various spheres viz. Todi Sitaramayya, Sankarabharana Narasayya, Ghanam Krishnayyar, Ghanam Sinayya, Pallavi Gopalayyar, Pallavi Doreswamy Iyer and so on.

#### Definition of Ragalapana

Ragalapana or Ragavistara is singing the various phrases admissible in the raga extempore, bringing out the varied facets of the raga. It has no tala. Herein the phrases in all the speeds like Vilamba, Madhya and Druta with all their intermediary degrees of speed may be sung.

The length and depth of the Alapana depends upon the knowledge and creative ability of the performer. As there is no restriction regarding the duration of the svaras, a musician has vast scope to sing elaborately.

#### Syllables to be used in Ragalapana

"Panchamarabu", a Tamil work written



by Arivanar, belonging to not later than 12th century, is the earliest work to refer to the word Alatti and the syllables to be used therein. It says that Alatti or Alapana should be started with sound "m" using the consonants "t" and "n" which occur in Tenna and Tena. It may be sung with short vowels as *a i u ye* as we sing for tana or long vowels *a i u e* etc., as we sing for alapana.

Coming to the modern period, Subbarama Dikshitar in his "Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini" says that in Alapana the syllables Tanam, Tanamta should be used. According to Prof. P. Sambamoorthy the syllables *Tadarinam tom* may be used and musical phrases like *ra ra ra, la la la, ya nya* etc., should be avoided.

It is said that Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer the reputed musician of the latter half of 19th century, used to begin his Alapana with the name of the Lord Sankara. In the Ragalapana mostly the syllables "Anamta" were used by him. The "m" kara when sung by him resembled the Nada emanating from the conch. Thus the vowel used by him in Alapana is "a" the consonant were "t", "n" and "m". The vowel "a" is the most resonant and deepest of all the other vowels.

In the book "Isai Ulagil Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan" written by Pallavi Subbayya Bhagavathar, the disciple of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, it is said that the syllables *ya ra la* and *o* should not be used.

#### Procedure

Many of the works starting with

"Sangita Sudha" have described different stages in the exposition of Ragalapana viz. Akshiptika, four stages of Ragavardhani and Sthayi.

Akshiptika is the introductory section wherein the raga is manifested. The first three stages of Ragalapana emphasizes the Mandra, Madhya and Tara Sthayis and the fourth, Murchana Prastharas, extending over all the three octaves were to be sung.

Sthayi is of two types - 1) Arohana Sthayi and 2) Avarohana Sthayi.

In the Arohana Sthayi swaras are to be in Arohana Krama and in the Avarohana Sthayi, the Sthayi swaras should be in Avarohana Krama.

The total duration of the different stages of Ragalapana mentioned by Prof. P. Sambamoorthy is about 45 mts.

Akshiptika	5 minutes
Ragavardhani stage I	10 minutes
Ragavardhani stage II	10 minutes
Ragavardhani stage III	7 minutes
Ragavardhani stage IV	5 minutes
Sthayi	8 minutes

He has said that sometimes the two Ragavardhanis are combined and sung as one.

But now Alapana is sung only in two stages. The first stage covers Mandra Sthayi and Madhya Sthayi with occasional flights in Tara Sthayi and the second stage emphasizes Tara Sthayi and then Madhyamakala phrases covering all the three Sthayis are sung. The Alapana is rendered within 10 minutes.

K. V. Srinivasa Iyengar in his "Ganabhaskaram" has said that the

Alapana of a raga should gradually proceed upwards. Only then Ranjakatava will increase gradually. He says that some of the musicians start the Alapana on the Tara Panchama and suddenly come down to Madhya Shadja like a rock rolling down from a mountain.

#### Tana or Madhyama Kala

In Tana also, phrases of various combinations are used. But herein there is Laya. The most important characteristic feature of Tana is medium tempo. Therefore phrases used may be Hrasva or Dirgha with two or three Matras at the most. Of course in the beginning of each phrase Dirgha Swara with four Matras such as *p,,,pmp,-ddp,-pmp*, etc., are used. This is followed by phrases of different patterns like Tisra, Chaturasra, Khanda, Misra and Sankirna and combinations of 3+5 or 5+3, 4+4, 3+3 and so on. Sometimes phrases in Drutakala are also sung along with Madhyamakala phrases.

#### Syllables used in Tana

"Sangita Kaumudi" says that word "Ananta" which signifies the name of Iswara should be used repeatedly.

Shri N. Chennakesavayya in his book "Ragalapana Paddhati Tana Mattu Pallavi" says that, in the word Tana "Takara" represents Sankara, "Akara" represents Brahma, "Nakara" represents Vishnu. The Trimurthis merge as a Bijamantra and by reciting the Mantra one can obtain the blessings of Devatas and attain Purusharthas.

Subbarama Dikshitar says that

Madhyamakala is singing "Tanamta" "Tananna" and "Tanamna" step by step in Madhyamakala and when Nyasa is made Vilambakala should be used. According to Prof. P. Sambamoorthy the syllables to be used are "Ananta" "Tanamna" and "Tananna". Therefore even in the Tana exposition the syllables "t", "n", "m" were used. Now most of the musicians use the words "Ananta" "Tanamta" and "Tomta".

#### Pallavi

Regarding the etymology of the word "Pallavi" there are many views.

Most of the scholars are of the view that the syllable Pa, lla, vi stand for Pada, Laya and Vinyasa. In the word Pallavi, the second syllables "lla" is a conjunct consonant. But it is referred to as equivalent to "Laya" in which the syllable "la" is a single consonant. Similarly the interpretation given by Shri N. Chennakesavayya is Padagarbha, Laya and Vinyasa. Even here the second syllable "la" is used. Originally the Pallavi of a Kriti formed the theme for Pallavi exposition. Hence the name Pallavi came to be used. Even this does not hold good. Many of the themes taken up for Pallavi exposition were not taken from the Pallavi of a Kriti.

Tachchur Singaracharlu has given the sahitya of 153 Pallavis which are commonly sung, but many of them are not the Pallavi of Kritis. The meaning given by N. Chennakesavayya is that the word might have been derived from the word "Pallava" which means tender shoot. The Pallavi exposition begins as a tender shoot of a plant with simple melody and



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blossoms forth into a magnificent tree endowed with melodic richness and complex rhythmic articulations. This definition is very apt.

Whatever may be the interpretation given by various scholars, Pada, Padagarbha, Laya and Vinyasa are all important in Pallavi exposition.

### Padagarbha

Padagarbha which is called as "Arudi" in Tamil is the point which divides the Pallavi into two parts. At this point the Sahitya of the theme of a Pallavi coincides with the beat of the Tala. The portion which comes before the Padagarbha is Prathamanga and that which comes after the Padagarbha is Dvitiyanga. The fact that Prathamanga and Dvitiyanga are almost equal applies only to some of the Talas like Triputa, Rupaka, Mathya, Jhampa, etc., of Tisra and Chaturasra Jati. In Pallavis in Misra and Sankirna Jati, Prathamanga is longer. In Pallavis in Dhruva Tala with three Laghus and one Druta and Ata Tala with two Laghus and two Drutas, Arudi does not occur at the mid point.

In some Pallavis set in the above Talas there are two Arudis. But in Pallavis such as Simhanandana Tala and other rare Talas like Lakshmisha Tala we do not find the Arudi at all.

With the emergence of the concept of Padagarbha as an important Anga, Pallavis without Arudi have become obsolete.

### Stages in Pallavi exposition

- 1) Enunciation, 2) Niraval, 3) Trikala

- 4) Tisra Nadai, 5) Kalpana Svara and 6) Ragamalika Kalpana Svara.

The theme of the Pallavi has to be rendered indicating clearly the Eduppu, distribution of syllables and Padagarbha.

### Niraval

In Niraval, variation should be started after Padagarbha. The Sahitya syllables should be sung in their original places as that of the theme. In the beginning variation should be made for the last quarter of the avarta. It should be gradually increased and at the end of each phase the theme has to be repeated. Niraval is done in three stages.

1. The tempo in which the Pallavi is set with phrases in Madhyamakala and Drutakala.
2. Samakala
3. Madhyamakala

### Trikala

At present only Trikala is done for Pallavi. Just as we sing for Varna, the Eduppu is kept constant and three Kalas are sung. In this method of singing, the Padagarbha will not fall on the total of Aksharakala. Tisra Nadai means singing the Pallavi in Tisra Gathi.

Another Paddhati which was followed by our ancients was Anuloma and Pratiloma. Anuloma is increasing the speed of music to second and third Kala keeping the speed of the Tala constant. Pratiloma is increasing the speed of the Tala to second and third Kala keeping the speed of music constant.



In singing Anuloma and Pratiloma, the Padagarbha has to be given importance. Therefore the Eduppu of the Pallavi has to be reduced to half and one-fourth in the second and third degrees of speed.

This method has been illustrated in the book "Ragalapana Paddhati Tana Mattu Pallavi" of Shri Chennakesavayya and South Indian Music - Book IV of Prof. P. Sambamoorthy. Now this Paddhati has become out of vogue. Some musicians sing the Pallavi in one Kalai and next in lower degree of speed and still lower degree of speed and call it as Anuloma. But this may be called as Viloma.

### Kalpana Svara

Kalpana Svara is done for  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1,  $\frac{1}{2}$  etc., Avartas, first in Vilambakala and next in Madhyamakala. This is followed by Kalpana Svara in Tisra Nadai, Kuraippu, Sarvalaghu patterns, Makuta Svara and Ragamalika Kalpana Svara.

But when the time allotted for the Pallavi is less, many of the above stages are omitted. Thus Pallavi exposition which took a major portion of the concert has now become a minor item. □

**Courtesy:** *Journal of the Music Academy, Vol. LXVIII, 1997.*



### Smt. Radha Namboodiri, new Director & Principal of Sangeetha Mahavidyalaya

*A musician of outstanding merit, Smt. Radha Namboodiri (nee Warriar) needs no introduction to the world of Music. Nevertheless, we have pleasure in giving a pen-picture of her musical achievements for the benefit of our readers.*

*After having received the title of "Sangeetha Vidwan" from the Central College of Karnatic Music, way back in 1968, she underwent training from Sangeetha Kalanidhi, Semmangudi Shri Srinivasa Iyer under the Govt. of India Scholarship Scheme. She continued to receive advanced training from her Guru and from Shri T. M. Tyagarajan, his leading disciple, both of whom moulded her latent skills and musical acumen. Her style and music thus had the glow and stamp of authentic training and is steeped in tradition and deep classicism. Endowed with a fine voice, she sings with fluency and grace, and one can discern the distinctive stamp of mastery in aesthetics.*

*She has won many prizes and certificates in the various competitions she participated. A much sought after concert artist, she has a number of concerts to her credit, all over India.*

*A B.A. (Hons.) with English Literature and Sanskrit as subsidiary, she is a high profiled personality and has served with the All India Radio and Doordarshan, where she held high positions, and retired as Director, Central Sales Unit, A.I.R., Mumbai.*

*The Sabha is indeed fortunate to have this versatile musician at the helm of affairs, as its new Director & Principal of the Sri Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Mahavidyalaya. Her induction to the Mahavidyalaya is sure to prove a great asset to the Institution and it is hoped that she will enrich the interests of its activities and take the Vidyalaya to greater heights.* □

### KEDARAGAULA by Prof. S.R. Janakiraman

Kedaragaula is a janya of Kambhoji mela. It is sampurna; nishada is the graha nyasa and amsa; 'Geyo yama turiyake' an evening raga. Tulaja says it is an upanga raga. All these details given by Tulaja are unquestionably true in current lakshya as well. No doubt nishada is a very important amsa and nyasa. It is not found in usage as graha as much. As a matter of fact, rishabha is the most powerful and enlightening graha, amsa and nyasa for Kedaragaula. Why it has been overlooked by Tulaja is not known. Further, the expression: 'asyarohe nisadagandhara langhanam' looks quite strange.

The deletion of gandhara in Kedaragaula in the ascent is an acknowledged and established fact. But where is the nishada deleted in the ascent? Though Tulaja says that nishada is langhana in the arohana, there is hardly one illustrative phrase of Tulaja where nishada is langhana. The illustrative phrases are as follows: - 'Sa Sa ni dha pa ni ni dha pa ma ga ri - ri ma pa ni Ni dha ni sa ni dha pa ma pa ni sa' - Ayitta prayogas. In the phrases 'ni dha ni sa' and 'pa ni ni sa' in the ascending order, nishada is evident. The phrase 'ni dha ni sa' is prohibited now. Further, two more phrases as cited by Tulaja deserve only to be discarded. They are 'pa dha ni sa ri ma ma pa' and 'ga ma pa ni dha pa dha ni sa'. Thus the statements made by Tulaja and his illustrative phrases are quite at variance

with each other. It is a matter for regret that Tulaja has not noticed the dominating influence of rishabha of Kedaragaula at all. It is quite possible that Kedaragaula had well established melodic worth in the present form by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century A. D. itself.

Tulaja gives another phrase under grahasvara khanda as 'dha pa ma ga ma dha dha ni ni'. Tulaja can be held guilty of having disfigured and caricatured Kedaragaula, one of the most melodious ragas of the present day. Barring the above quoted few phrases, the rest of the phrasings of Tulaja are in perfect line with the scale-structure of Kedaragaula and the melodic entity thereof as it prevails today.

Before embarking upon the academic history of the origin, evolution and development of Kedaragaula, we will do well to ponder over how Subbarama Dikshitar deals with the raga. In this connection it may be particularly noted that the great Karvetnagar Brothers, Govindasamayya and Koovanasamayya, the doyens of varna composition, have composed a varna in Kedaragaula, in the latter part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This varna is given in notation in the *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* from which we get a correct, compact and contemporaneous picture of many of the most important ragas of present day.

Subbarama Dikshitar says it is a raganga raga - 28<sup>th</sup> Mela (Bana - Bhu) with



'ri gu ma pa nu' as the svara mnemonics. The mention of 'nu' here is definitely a print mistake. It cannot be 'nu'. It should be 'ni', indicative of Kaisiki nishada. Then only it can be 'bhu' mela. If it is 'nu', it should be Kakali nishada and then it should be 'ma' mela, i.e., the fifth mela of a chakra. All these details cannot be ascribed to Venkatamakhi. It is evidently the work of Muddu Venkatamakhi on whom alone Subbarama Dikshitar depended for all the knowledge of melas and ragas. As usual, Subbarama Dikshitar cites a lakshana sloka under the authorship of the 'so called' Venkatamakhi:

*'Kedaragaulah sampurnastravohe  
gadhavarjitah nisadagraha  
samyuktah sayankale pragiyate'*

The name 'Kedarigaula' is evidently wrong, as printed on the Tamil translation of the *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini*, brought out by the Madras Music Academy. The correct version should only be 'Kedaragaula' as given in the Anubandha printed at the end of the edition of the text of the *Chaturdandi Prakasika*, printed and published by the Music Academy.

At the very outset it may be pointed out that Kedaragaula was not a mela at all to the real Venkatamakhi, the genuine author of *Chaturdandi Prakasika*. Venkatamakhi mentions only Kambhoji as a mela though in the raga chapter of the same work *Chaturdandi Prakasika* he says, while describing Narayanagaula, that the raga, Narayanagaula is a janya of Kedaragaula, which is absolutely

contradictory to the content of the text of the *Chaturdandi Prakasika* (Raga Prakarana Adhyayasloka – 102). But in the same raga chapter we find Kedaragaula as a janya of Kambhoji mela in Sloka 98.

*'kedaragaulah sampurnah  
kambhojimelasambavah'*

How could the same author treat one and the same raga as a janya raga in Sloka 98 and as a mela in Sloka 102 of the same chapter. Again we take refuge in M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer's defence – "What sort of copy of the manuscript copied and recopied by different indifferent copiests.....".

In the Anubandha portion printed at the end of the edition of the text of *Chaturdandi Prakasika* brought out by the Music Academy, Madras, in Sloka 7 we find Harikedaragaula listed as a raganga raga which has connoted a mela both to Muddu Venkatamakhi and his faithful follower Subbarama Dikshitar. Again in the same portion, in Sloka 41, Kedaragaula is mentioned as a rakti raga (second in the list, the first being Bhairavi). As per current thought ragas like Todi, Sankarabharana, Kharaharapriya, Harikambhoji, Kalyani etc. could both be a mela and rakti raga, mela in the sense of a scale structure, a faithful rendering of the inherent notes in the ascent and descent in a regular order, but a raga in the sense that it is something more than mere bony stuff, but an entity in full flesh and blood. This analogy does not hold good in the case of Venkatamakhi or Subbarama Dikshitar. To them, even janya

ragas have been raganga ragas, but how? It is not intelligible to a current thinker. This however could be corroborated with the 43<sup>rd</sup> sloka of the Anubandha portion of the text of the *Chaturdandi Prakasika* 'madhyamavatidhanyasi.....raktiragakah'.

After quoting the lakshana sloka found in the Anubandha portion of the *Chaturdandi Prakasika*, Subbarama Dikshitar gives further details as follows: Murchana: 'sa ri ma pa ni sa – sa ni dha pa ma ga ri sa' Raganga – sampurna – nishada graha – rakti raga – gandhara and nishada are varjya in the arohana - an evening raga'. Note :- In Kedaragaula, rishabha, madhyama, nishada and gandhara give much of ranjakatva. Rishabha is a nyasa. In some contexts, nishada is a graha (eduppu svara as Subbarama Dikshitar puts it). A prasiddha raga, it has come down through lakshyas of our ancestors.

The following few observations may be worthy of note. While mentioning the ranjaka of jiva svaras of Kedaragaula, Subbarama Dikshitar places gandhara last. Gandhara is of course used profusely in Kedaragaula in the descent. But it enjoys no prominence. Bahutva is also an aspect of amsa as per purvacharyas (Sarangadeva etc.)

*Bahulatvam prayogesu vyapakam  
tvamsalaksanam*

*Sangita Ratnakara*

But, in Kedaragaula, gandhara looks almost and insignificant note. On very many occasions we come across a

phrase like 'Ri Ri Ri ga ma Ga ma ri'. Here we find gandhara occurring not only in the arohana krama, but also as a dirgha swara (elongated note). Gandhara can never be a graha or nyasa. That is certain. The phrase 'ri ga ri sa' as in 'ma pa ni sa ri ga ri sa' looks very common in lakshya. These points of note are well-illustrated in his sanchari by Subbarama Dikshitar. In the lakshya gita (in fact it is lakshana gita in modern parlance) the raga hovers for the most part in the higher regions (tara sthayi).

Similarly the position of dhaivata also does not look very strong at all in Kedaragaula. In the descent the occurrence of dhaivata is inevitable. However the phrase 'ni dha ni pa' is seen only in Narayanagaula. Phrases like 'ri ma pa dha pa ma ga ri' are not uncommon in Kedaragaula. Dhaivata, like Gandhara cannot be a graha or nyasa. Very rarely in a phrase like 'ma pa Dha: Pa;; m ga Ri', the dhaivata is elongated a little.

The above phrase constitute the pep of the raga, with which Ramnad (Poochi) Srinivasa Iyengar has commenced his immortal composition in Kedaragaula beginning with the words 'Saragunapalimpa'.

To trace Kedaragaula prior to 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. has been found futile. Kedaragaula is frequently met with in the sankirtanas of Tallapaka Annamacharya (1424 - 1503 A.D.) An example is 'Rammanave vani rammanave' – in the *Sringara Sankirtana* – Vol XII of the T.T.D. Publications. Naturally the Karnataka composers could have noticed



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Kedaragaula. Purandaradasa (1484 - 1564 A.D.) was a junior contemporary of Annamacharya.

Ever since the genus-species system emerged, Kedaragaula has held the status of a mela along with Kambhoji. That is a mystery though both Kambhoji and Kedaragaula should fall under the same clan. Prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. we do not come across Kedaragaula in the medieval literature. Kedaragaula is not to be found either in Narada's *Sangita Makaranda* or in Parsvadeva's *Sangita Samaya Sara* or in Sarangadeva's *Sangita Ratnakara*. But in the Panns of Tevaram of the 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. we have one 'Gandhara Panchamam' which is acknowledged to correspond to Kedaragaula. It is classified as a Pagal Pann (South Indian Music - Book VI by late Prof. Sambamoorthy). Incidentally it may be mentioned here that we have one of the vikruta jatis of madhyama grama as Gandhara Panchami. Similarity of nomenclature may be one of the inferences to arrive at a possible premise. But it may be far and far away from a convincing conclusion. The madhyama grama is known to have been the primordial or the fundamental scale in the music of the ancient Tamils and it is Harikambhoji in scale structure.

We get the treatment of Kedaragaula through the *Sangita Sudha* of Govinda Dikshitar on the authority of *Sangita Sara* of Vidyananya, as found in pages 244 and 245 of the edition of *Sangita Sudha*, edited by late T. V. Subba Rao and Pandit Subramanya Sastri and printed and

published by the Madras Music Academy which is as follows: "Kedaragaula is a mela with shadja, madhyama and panchama as suddha svaras, the two svaras rishabha and dhaivata as panchasruti, gandhara as antara and nishada as kaisiki; nishada is the graha, amsa and nyasa". These details are endorsed in toto by Venkatamakhi and Tulaja. But to these two, Kedaragaula was not a mela, but only a janya of Kambhoji mela. Govinda Dikshitar then gives the akshiptika, ragavardhini, shadja sthayi, madhyama sthayi and rishabha sthayi, vartani and nyasa. The essence of all the treatment confirms that the melodic form of Kedaragaula has been well established.

To Ramamatya (1550 A.D.) Kedaragaula was one of his 20 melas. He mentions Narayanagaula as one of the janyas of Kedaragaula. Ramamatya gives shadja, madhyama and panchama as suddha, rishabha and dhaivata as panchasruti, gandhara as chyuta madhyama gandhara and nishada as chyuta shadja nishada. When Ramamatya describes Kedaragaula as a raga in the Raga chapter, he says that it is a sampurna raga with nishada as graha, amsa and nyasa and it is to be sung in the fourth yama of the day. Why and how Ramamatya has given the gandhara and nishada of Kedaragaula respectively as chyuta madhyama gandhara and chyuta shadja nishada is the question. These two, first of all, do not constitute swarasthanas. They are only sruti sthanas - a pramana sruti (81/80) higher than their respective preceding notes, antara gandhara and kakali nishada. There is occasion for



gandhara to rise up to the level of chyuta madhyama gandhara in Kedaragaula. As a matter of fact the gandhara of Kedaragaula is docile and has not an assertive position, though its occurrence is inevitable. As far as nishada is concerned, the nishada may rise up a little (as in the phrases 'ri ma pa Ni sa; and Ni S; ni dha dha pa' as occurring in Thiruvottiyur Thyagayyer's Adi tala tana varna 'Sami daya'), but never so near as kakali nishada, not to speak of chyuta shadja nishada, the level of which is definitely much above kakali nishada and almost near shadja. In rest of the places the nishada is only kaisiki, in its scheduled position.

In this connection it may be mentioned in passing, for whatever it is worth, what Ramamatya says about the sets of melas taking antara gandhara, chyuta madhyama gandhara, kakali nishada and chyuta shadja nishada. In Slokas 63-70 of the Mela Prakarana of *Svara Mela Kalanidhi* (a publication of the Annamalai University with an introduction and translation of the text by late M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer), Ramamatya says that the melas taking chyuta madhyama gandhara and chyuta shadja nishada could as well be merged with those melas taking antara gandhara and kakali nishada in which case the melas would be only 15 and even then Kedaragaula would remain a mela, while Kambhoji would get implied in Saranganata. These are all whimsical theories. Moreover Ramamatya has committed another blunder. According

to him, the two melas Saranganata and Kedaragaula become identical in svarasthanas and differ only in the matter of graha, amsa and nyasa. It may however be true that despite similar structure of any two scales, they may differ as ragas with regard to the highlighting of different svaras as graha, amsa and nyasa. This can practically be illustrated. It is quite possible to establish the individuality of Sama and Arabhi with phrases deleting nishada. Whatever it be, Saranganata and Kedaragaula should not have been equated with one another in as much as Saranganata is entirely a different raga, falling under Gaula or Malavagaula clan. Venkatamakhi however found fault only with one aspect of Kedaragaula that Ramamatya was utterly at fault, in having given chyuta shadja nishada, whereas, he says, it takes only kaisiki nishada. Venkatamakhi goes to the extent of reproaching Ramamatya that those who are guided by Ramamatya's mela system would fall only into the wells in the forest.

None of these treatise-writers has either been totally right or totally wrong. Each one commits mistakes in his own way and a reader has got to be scrupulously careful in guarding himself against such errors.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Kedaragaula has retained its melodic form and individuality and has not got disfigured. □

*Courtesy: Music Academy*

## THE MUSICAL CONTENT OF BHARATANATYAM

by Prof. P. Sambamurthy

The musical content of Bharata Natyam is an exciting branch of study. It is obvious that there can be no dancing without music. Even in an absolute dance like Tandava, which is performed to the accompaniment of pure rhythmical sounds, the rhythmical syllables are sung or sounded on particular notes. In the musical compositions used in dancing, we have to take note of three factors, viz., music, rhythm, and sahitya. A musical composition intended to be merely sung in a concert and a musical composition intended to be danced to, can easily be distinguished. With the exception of the Padam and the Pada Varna, the music of the other dance forms may not have any high musical value. But all compositions intended to be sung in concerts do possess a high musical value. In musical forms accompanying dance, there is always scope for the interpolation of an intricate pattern of Jatis for foot-work along with hand movements. The conductor suddenly shoots off into passages of Jatis in cross rhythms and the dancer dances to these Jatis. Cross-rhythms may be used in musical concerts occasionally. But cross rhythms are a regular feature of dance performances. The composition taken on hand may be in four-time measure and in the course of the dance, the Nattuvanar may plunge into a passage of Jatis in triple time and revert to the original theme later on, at the correct and

appropriate place. A dancer has to be alert and forget the erstwhile rhythm for the time being and dance to the new rhythm.

With the exception of the Thillana, which is used both in concerts of music and dance, the musical forms used in music concerts have no passages of Jatis. But passages of Jatis are an integral feature of dance compositions like Alarippu, Sabdam, Svarajati and Pada Varnam.

No song is taken up for Abhinaya unless it admits of latent ideas capable of being intelligently portrayed through a series of gestures. To follow the sequences of Abhinaya with interest, one should know both the languages of the gestures and the Bhava of the sahitya. The Padams of classical composers constitute a rich repertoire in the sphere of dance.

Just as Music admits of the divisions, Art music, Sacred music, Operatic music, Martial music and Folk music; Dance also admits of the divisions, Art dance, Sacred dance, Dance pertaining to Nritya Nataka and Kurvanji Nataka, Martial dance and Folk dance. The sequence of the Ghana-Naya-Desya types of ragas adhered to in a music concert has its parallel in the sequence of items in a concert of Bharata Natyam – Nritta, Nrithya and Abhinaya. Just as in Art music, we experience Gana rasa or pure aesthetic joy, and in Applied Music, other rasas like devotion, love, heroism, disgust, wonder, etc., in concerts of Art dance we experience Natya Rasa or pure aesthetic



joy (pertaining to the realm of dance). In Applied Dance, other Rasas like love (both the Sringara and Vipralambha types), heroism, devotion, etc., are experienced.

The vocal exercises practised in music to attain high technique in performance, have their parallel in the Adavu Jatis and other exercises to attain the requisite technique and perfection in dancing.

The ragas used in dance musical forms are all Rakti ragas, i.e. ragas which have an emotional appeal and not ragas which have a mere intellectual appeal. Ragas capable of evoking more than one Rasa are generally used. According to the gradation of feeling intended to be portrayed, the composer resorts to the particular raga and emphasizes particular phrases in it. Taking an emotion like sorrow, for example, various gradations of this feeling can be effectively portrayed by ragas like Mukhari, Punnagavarali, Ghanta, Nadanamakirya and Ahiri.

Of the musical forms used in Bharata Natyam, the Padams and Pada Varnas have an independent musical value. The slow tempo of the Padam is ideally suitable for the delineation of the Raga Bhava in all its colourful aspects. In the Pada Varna, there is music in both slow tempo and medium tempo. Graces in slow tempo like Vali and Ullasita can be heard in all their fullness and glory in these compositions.

The tessitura of the music of the dance forms mostly embraces the middle octave and the lower tetrachord of the upper octave. The music has to be effective and hence phrases in the lower octave are

rarely met with in dance forms.

Rhythm is the backbone of all dancing. When Abhinaya is performed for a Sloka, Padya, Viruttam or other verse, there is no rhythm as such. The verse is sung in some appropriate raga and Abhinaya is performed. In all other cases, dance music is essentially rhythmic.

Corresponding to the solfa syllables Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni in music, there are the rhythmical solfa syllables, Tad Hi Tom Nam, Taka Tari Kita, Naka, Tom Tadhingin Natom etc. Phrases of variegated beauty are coined with these syllables and dances are performed.

This lends a certain liveliness, the like of which is unknown in the music of most other civilizations.

There is scope for creative dance. A new pattern of Jatis or rhythmical solfa phrases can be coined for a number of avartas and suitable Adavus set for the same can be danced. For a well-known theme of a song, a new and hitherto not thought of latent bhava, may be conceived and Abhinaya performed. A classical composition may be chosen and dances may be set to it and performed.

Technical subtlety is insisted upon in musical compositions used in Bharata Natyam. The Padams of Ghanam Krishnayyar like "Velavare" in Bhairavi raga and "Parengum Partallum" in Kalyani raga are in the full Varik style. The continuous curve of Indian classical music is experienced there in all its lustrous forms. Svarakshara beauties are felt in Javalis like "Paripovalera" in Bilahari raga - Rupaka tala and in Varnas like "Kamalakshi" in Kambhoji

raga - Jhampa tala. Intricately couched Svaram-sahityas are seen in Pravesa Darus like "Prahaldudu" (Bhairavi raga-Adi tala). The Huseni Svarajati contains a beautiful example of Svaram Sahitya Jati.

Rare time-measures like Simhanandana tala are found in the Tillana "Gaurinayaka" in Kanada raga. Jatis in Simhanandana tala are recited during the performance of Simha Natanam. The Jatis recited during palanquin dances of the Vitanka Kshetras of South India and the Jatis figuring in the Kavuttuvams are highly enjoyable.

The musical compositions sung in Bharata Natyam are not loaded with Sangatis (variations), subtle nuances and excessive Gamakas. If these technical beauties are present, they will be a detracting factor, weaning our attention away from the dance. Sometimes for the sake of Ranjakatva, certain phrases, not in strict accordance with raga lakshana, are used. The time-measures are mostly Misra Chapu (7 made up as 3 plus 4), Adi (8 matras), Rupaka (6 matras) and Jhampa (10 matras). In the palanquin dances performed in the Vitanka Kshetras, rhythmic sequences in Tisra (3), Chaturasra (4), Khanda (5), Misra (7) and Sankirna (9) are played on the drums.

The varieties of Jatis used in dance and dance dramas are fascinating. Patra Jati is a short passage of Jatis associated with a particular character and recited wherever the character enters the stage during a dance drama. Antya Jati is a short passage of Jatis performed sung to mark the conclusion of an episode or scene

in a dance drama. Mukha Jati is the introductory passage of Jatis performed at the commencement of a scene. Makuta Jati is the passage of Jatis recited at the conclusion of each section of some compositions. Brisk passages of Jatis adorn some of the compositions in the Sanskrit Opera "Krishna Lila Tarangini" of Narayana Tirtha.

Ritualistic dances performed in South Indian temples are based on Bharata Natyam. The Nava Sandhi Nrityam, i.e. the dance performed in the Brahma, Indra, Agni, Yama, Niruruti, Vamana, Vayu, Kubera and Isana Sandhis during the 'Dvajaroohanam' (Inauguration) Day of the Annual Temple Festivals has preserved certain types of religious dance. The constituent angas of the talas used herein comprise some of the Shodasangas like the Druta Viramam. The Sandhi Jatis or the rhythmic phrases recited at each Sandhi are interesting to hear. During the ritual of Sarva Vadhya, still performed in a few temples, one can witness rare types of Bharata Natyam.

Jaya Nrityam is a victory dance performed to celebrate a victory or to welcome a victorious army. The Jaya Nrityam is beautifully depicted in the sculpture in the Gopuram of the temple at Tirukkodikaval, Tanjore District. On the walls are sculptured warriors riding on chariots, elephants and horses in addition to the Infantry. The time-honoured four-fold division of the Indian Army into Ratha, Gaja, Turaga and Padadi is thus depicted.

(Continued on Page 31)



## MANDALA OF HEALING RAGAS PART OF COSMIC ENERGY

by Bindu Chawla

Meditation activates the intensely loving and healing properties of the Cosmos, which we refer to as Cosmic Energy. A profound example of this healing is the raga - which happens when the musician sings it, and also when the listener listens to it - as meditation. The word raga itself translates as '(Cosmic) Love'. True to its composite nature, the Cosmos is said to contain 999 ragas: the 'Cosmic Harmonies', each harmony a melodic configuration, a Mandala as it were, and unique.

Even so, the Gurus always say: When you practise one you practise all, when you practice all you lose all. When you sing the raga, the notes that you do not sing are also being realized in their dormant state in the presence of their absence as it were. Each raga represents the entire Cosmos, and not its fragment. Which is why the Gurus will never say that such and such notes 'do not' exist in a raga, but that such and such notes are not used.

Ustad Amir Khan Saheb of the Indore Gharana innovated a style that emerged from the horizontal (a rarity) and not the vertical (the usual) notescapes of the mind, resulting in cyclical, not linear movements of the raga. In a sense he made novel interpretation of the vision of the Greek mathematician Pythagoras, who gave us the concept of the eight note, which came to be assimilated into Hindustani music. A concept that, when put to use, opened the

'third eye' of the raga. For when the seven-note scale became an octave, it came to be divided into two halves, which further facilitated the *Yin* (dark) and *Yang* (light) theories of *Vaad* and *Samvaad*, of speaking and answering in music.

Ustad Amir Khan Saheb realized that it was the *Yang* - the *Vaad* or speaking notes - which formed the nucleus of the raga, or where its protein lay. All composing in the raga lay in its first half, where the play of notes in their twos and threes and their fours created rich musical ideas. Onward of four (five, six and so on), the music that emerged, was of a repetitive nature. Ustad Amir Khan's disciple Pandit Amarnath once inadvertently let out this secret as he spoke in the middle of a performance - 'Hindustani raga aadha seekhne ki zaroorat hoti hai'. (You need to learn only half the Hindustani raga.)

But this is only half the story. Ustad Amir Khan Saheb combined the first half of the *Madhya* or the middle register with the second half of the *Mandra* or lower register - next to it - to get a double *Yang* octave, handling the *Mandra* from the perspective of the *Madhya*. "The *Mandra* singing became a mirror to the *Madhya*", explained Pandit Amarnath, "rather than a repetition, encouraging intense introspection and reflectivity". As a result, the style came to be called one of the most serious (*Gambhir*) and peaceful (*Chaendar*) ever heard in Hindustani

Khayal music, which did not scream itself from the rooftops to make its presence felt.

What the Ustad had done was to give the raga an abstract, aural body, which is why his music is one of the most haunting from amongst the legion of artistes gone by. He had found a great way to unfold the mystic healing energies of the Cosmos. □

### Courtesy :

*The Speaking Tree, Times of India.*

### The Musical Content of Bharatanatyam

(Continued from Page 29)

The army is welcomed by a band of dancers on the streets to the accompaniment of music. This is a rare sculpture of its kind.

In addition to classical composers of dance music like Jayadeva, Narayana Tirtha, Kshetrajna, Muvvalur Sabhapati Iyer, Sarangapani, Ghanam Chinnayya, Ghanam Krishna Iyer, Merattur Venkatrama Sastri, Ponniah, Chinnayya, Sivanandam, Vadivelu and Svati Tirunal, mention may also be made of Vaidiswarankovil Subbarama Iyer, Chengalvaraya Sastri, Mysore Sadasiva Rao, Kundrakkudi Krishna Iyer, Pallavi Seshayyar, Pattabhiramayya and Dharmapuri Subbayyar. □

**Courtesy :** "Bharatanatyam - Indian Classical Dance Art", September 1957, Published by Marg Publications.

### OBITUARY



SHANMUKHA regrets to record the sad demise of Kanjira Vidwan **Shri H. P. Ramachar** on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006. He was 82. An

"A Top" artist of Akhashvani, he had his initial training from his father H. Puttachar, a eminent percussionist himself, and later underwent advanced training from Pudukottai Subramanya Iyer. Though he commenced his training in mrudangam and also in tabla, he developed a liking for Kanjira and practiced to perfection to attain mastery over it.

He has accompanied several leading artists in his long performing career, which includes Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, T. Chowdiah, M. S. Subbulakshmi, M. L. Vasantakumari, Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna, Veena Balachander and also the many young stars of today.

He was a recipient of several awards, notable among them being the "Rajyotsava Award" of Government of Karnataka; "Sangeeta Kalaratna" conferred on him by The Bangalore Gayana Samaja, when he presided over its 30<sup>th</sup> Music Conference; "Laya Kala Nipuna" and "K. Puttu Rao Memorial Palghat Mani Award" of the Percussive Arts Centre.

He has trained a number of students, and also has to his credit the formation of Mahila Laya Madhuri, an exclusive percussion ensemble performed solely by lady artists. His music heritage is now carried forward by his daughter Latha Ramachar, who is also a Kanjira artist. □



CULTURAL SCENE IN MUMBAI

Listening over the years from his 'maiden' appearance at Bharatiya in Mumbai to Shanmukhananda Main Auditorium via Talent Promotion Series, the writer who has been keenly evaluating the 'Second-liners', has found P. Unnikrishnan's career-graph steadily scaling high and reaching a maturity-point that vests in 'Vishranti' and 'Shanti'. The disciple of Dr. S. Ramanathan, Calcutta Krishnamoorthy and Savithri Sathyamurthy has come a long way carving a 'niche' for himself in the performing forum with a relaxed aplomb and profound artistry. His Manodharmic forays and rendition of composition do register the traditional stamp with an aesthetic flourish and finesse. His voice too has acquired a fine range and sheen.

However, in the latest cutcheri Unnikrishnan, the recent recipient of

"Shanmukha Sangeetha Shiromani Award", gave as one observed a near-Mudrita (closed mouth) rendition to which he resorted frequently, which at times took a casualty of Sahitya and melody too, that came in muffled whispers! Is it a style he is consciously adopting because something similar was observed in his Margazhi festival telecast too, if so for what?

One prays he is his normal self and performs with the same resilience and aplomb he used to do earlier.

The start with Palghat Parameswara Bhagavathar's Naatai Varnam *Sarasijanabha* was impressive bringing the mature musicianship in him.

After his Guru's favourite *Varalendu* (Gurjari) which glowed in its own orbit not drawing from parental shine of Mayamalavagoula, *Shambho Mahadeva* (Pantumarali) afforded a good launch pad for Niraval. If one overlooked the muffled diction of Sahitya earlier referred to, it was one melody stream imaginatively negotiated.

Bahudari delineation had a new aesthetic dimension. *Sadananda Tandavam* was an



usual stuff. O! *Jagadamba*, one of the masterpieces of Syama Sastri in Anandabhairavi cast a spell as there was Vilamba Saukhyam, no frenzied performing fervour, but a meditative mood exploring the Raga's depths. The rendition of the song in itself was satisfactory without any Manodharmic appendages.

Todi in top-foray start was impressive and the way he manoeuvred it through the Nishada and brought to the middle register and then set for an elaborate delineation with sprinklings of Sruti Bheda made for a sound picture of substantivity. Another masterpiece, this from Tyagaraja, *Kaddanu Variki* in a full-scale delineation with Niraval at '*Niddura Niraagarinchi*

*Mudduga Tamboora Patti*' followed by Sarvalaghu Swaras had its own impact. The imaginative breathtaking phasing of Niraval in Dhurita forays brought out a neat tuneful picture of the segment. Followed the Thani that took all the brunt of complexities of rhythm – Gathi Bheda – lavishly sewn into the percussive fabric, which both Tiruvarur Vaidyanathan (Mridangam) and Karthik (Ghatam) relished and played complementing each other. Naturally there was no thunder but tuneful Laya. Varadarajan (Violin) was satisfactory.

The Ragamalika Sloka and Tukkadas were quite pleasing but why was Khamas hewn in Hindustani garb leaving the Javali *Janaro* neither here nor there? □

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From Talent Exposure to Talent Promotion and on to Main Auditorium many a talent of Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya has blossomed under the aegis of the Sabha. While outstation talents straightway hopped on to Talent Promotion, the students of Vidyalaya had the initial 'Exposure' exercise which helped them and their mentors assess their acumen and mould accordingly on the progressive run. One such talent is S. Kasturi Rangan who has blossomed into a fine concert artiste. Featured in the Talent Promotion long back, he had a home-coming recently in a concert organized at the new *Bharat Ratna* M. S. Subbulakshmi Auditorium in Bharatiya premises. Incidentally, in its agenda of promoting and patronizing

artistes of caliber of the younger generation, Shanmukhananda has notched up a plan of presenting them at M. S. Auditorium before graduating onto Shanmukhananda Main.

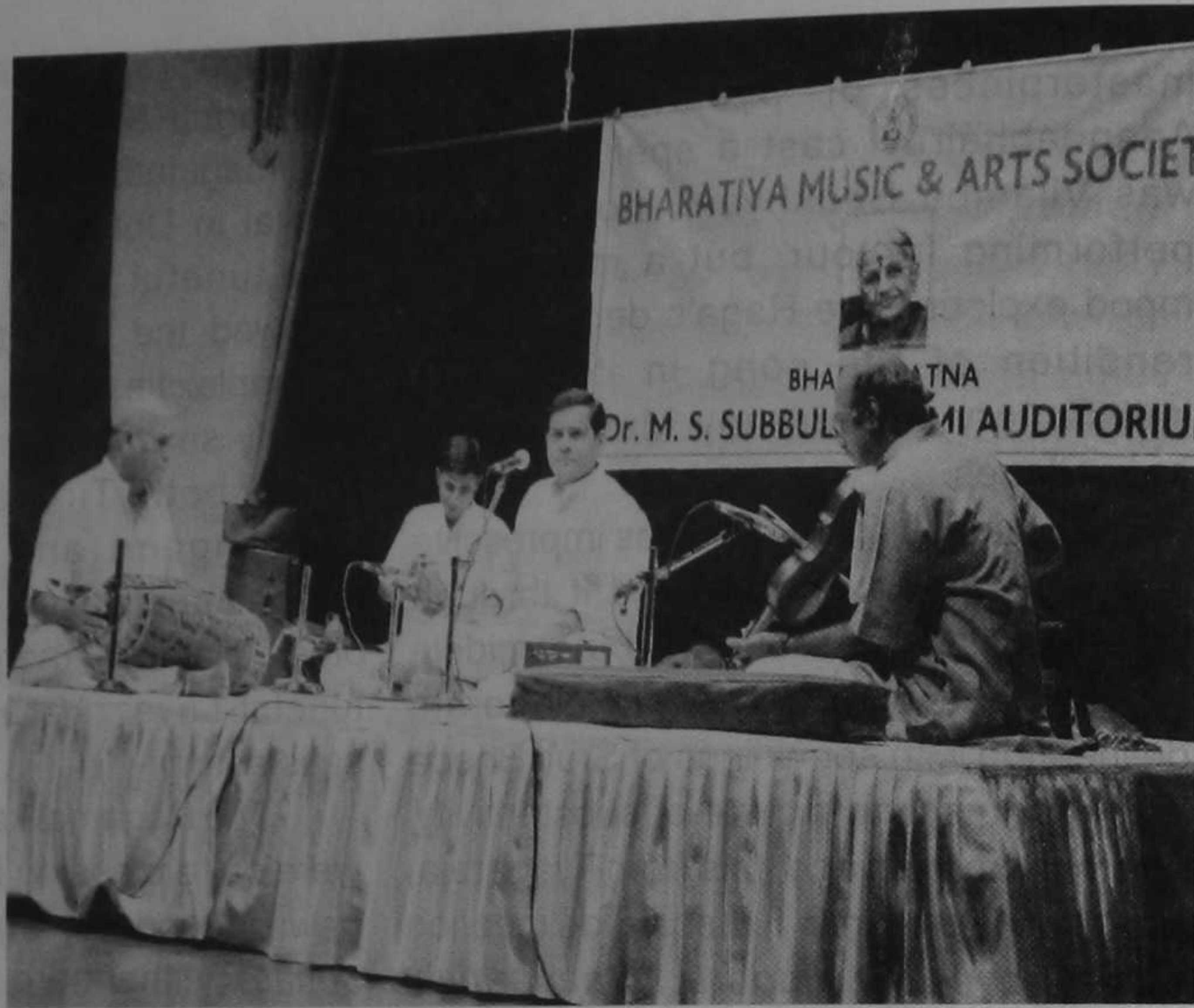
It is heartening to note that Kasturi Rangan's performance at Bharatiya spoke much about the grind and field experience, the Riyaz and sweat that go into the performing art. His felicity of voice and its flexibility is something to be appreciated. Nasalization of course comes to him natural, and he exploits it well. Having had his grind under Smt. Kalyani Sharma in Diploma in Music and advanced course classes in the Vidyalaya, he went to Madurai Seshagopalan for 'superspeciality'. That he has imbibed



both the styles and adopts them without inhibition and with sprinkles of his own imagination was evident from the concert he gave.

After the initial warming up number, *Deva Deva* (Mayamalavagoula), *Yaarenru Raghavanai* in due Vilambam, with a feel of the song, he entered *Brindavana*

*Saranga* with a freewheeling idiom. The *Alapana* had Hindustani shades, and after all the Raga has been adopted in Carnatic music from North. So long as the phrasings, pacing and phasing are pleasing and within the norms and ambit of Carnatic music, there is nothing to complain about. The delineation suited his voice texture and style that was predominantly Seshagopalan's. *Dikshitar's Soundararajam*, rarely rendered these days, was in typical *Dhrupad* style, slow and measured. The start in *Madhya Rishabha* was impressive before moving in *Meend* to *Tara Shadja*. And his *Saukhyam* in *Vilambam* was to be applauded. He romanticised the Raga and rendered the kriti with relish. The *Swaraprasthas* in measured progress both in *Vilamba* and *Durita* was well-done.



Mohanam was another delineation where his nasalised flexions helped him delve in its *Gamaka*-poised evocation. No romanticizing exercise here. And the prelude was apt for the *Kriti* that followed and the manner he took off in *Srothovaha Yathi Prastara*

*Nadachi Vachitavo*  
*Paalimpa Nadachi Vachitavo*  
*Nannupaalimpa Nadachi Vachitavo*

spoke of his musical acumen and involvement. The rest were good numbers. He had an inspiring team of accompanists – *Madurai Balasubramanian* playing enthusiastically, *Tanjavur Srikumar* inspiring him with subtle strokes on *Mridangam* and *Nerkunam Sankar* keeping up the momentum on *Kanjira*. □

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The other vocalist who was introduced to *Shanmukhananda* through *Talent Promotion* and now on a progressive concert circuit at *Bharatiya* was *Pantulu Rama*.

Range and resilience, melody and modulation and refreshingly reposeful exposition marked *Pantulu Rama's* concert. *Purvikalyani Raga* was a 'masterpiece' exposition. It highlighted aesthetics of modulation with finesse. No falsetto or crooning. It was noteworthy that both the artistes at *Bharatiya* relished the *Vilambam*.

*Rama's Meenakshi Memudam Dehi* was substantive in treatment. Besides *Vilamba* pace, her *Manodharma* took wings in *Niraval* and one was treated to some very original improvisation. Though there was too much improvisation in this segment, it did not matter so long as it was original. The placidity of the *Kriti*, its content and context and its octaval status were focused in the manner she confined the *Niraval* and *Swaraprasthas* to *Mandara* and *Madhyama Sthayi*.

Though endowed with thin-laced

voice there is certain weight. In spite of *Brikka*-phased breath-taking *Prayogas*, her aesthetic manoeuvres make an impact. *Arabhi* was one such delineation. And it was a main *Raga* for *RTP*. The suite was substantive with elaborate *Alapana*, *Tanam* and *Pallavi* in *Tisra Rupakam* – *Khanda Gati*. The *Pallavi* stance *Giriraja Suta Tanaya Sadaya Lamodara* was plied poised grandeur. *Niraval* is no doubt her forte and she sang with a relish.



The *Sloka*m on *Lord Rama* stringing *Mohanam*, *Kedaragaula*, *Sahana* and *Anandabhairavi* was another excellent *Manodharmic* exposition. The support from *Shri Murthy's* *Violin* was just adequate but *Sridhar* (*Mridangam*) seemed to be quite attuned to her style. His *Thani* was chic and crisp for the *Pallavi Tala*. □

- Kinnari



**BOOK REVIEW**

**A SOLEMN NIVEDANAM**

**"THE SAINT & SANGITA" A Fragrant Garland to Kanchi Mahaswami Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamikal** by "Garland" N. Rajagopalan; Published by: Sri Kanchi Mahaswami Peetarohana Shatabdi Mahotsava Trust, Mumbai, February 2006; Pages: 182; Price: Not mentioned

**"Satyojaataadhi Pancha Vaktraja Sarigamapadhani Vara Saptaswara..."**

So sang Saint Tyagaraja in *Nadatanumanisam Sankaram* (Chittaranjani) unfolding the origin of Saptaswaras. Seven Swaras from five faces? Intriguing. Answer eluded musicians and musicologists, but not Mahaswami who was not one to take anything at face value. Exploring music treatises, he came out with an apt answer. Like Ishwara, Shadja and Panchama are Swayambhus (self-born) and the rest five (Vikriti) Swaras were born out of the Lord's five faces!

"Why is Gambhira Nattai chosen for Mallari, played by Nagaswara Vidwans when the deities are taken for procession?"

"Panchakshara Bhoota, Pancha Linga, Pancha Shakti, Pancha Krutya, Pancha Maha Sabda... Issues associated with God are indicated by number five. Aagamas indicate that rituals in temples should commence in units of five. Hence Mallari in Gambhira Nattai which has five

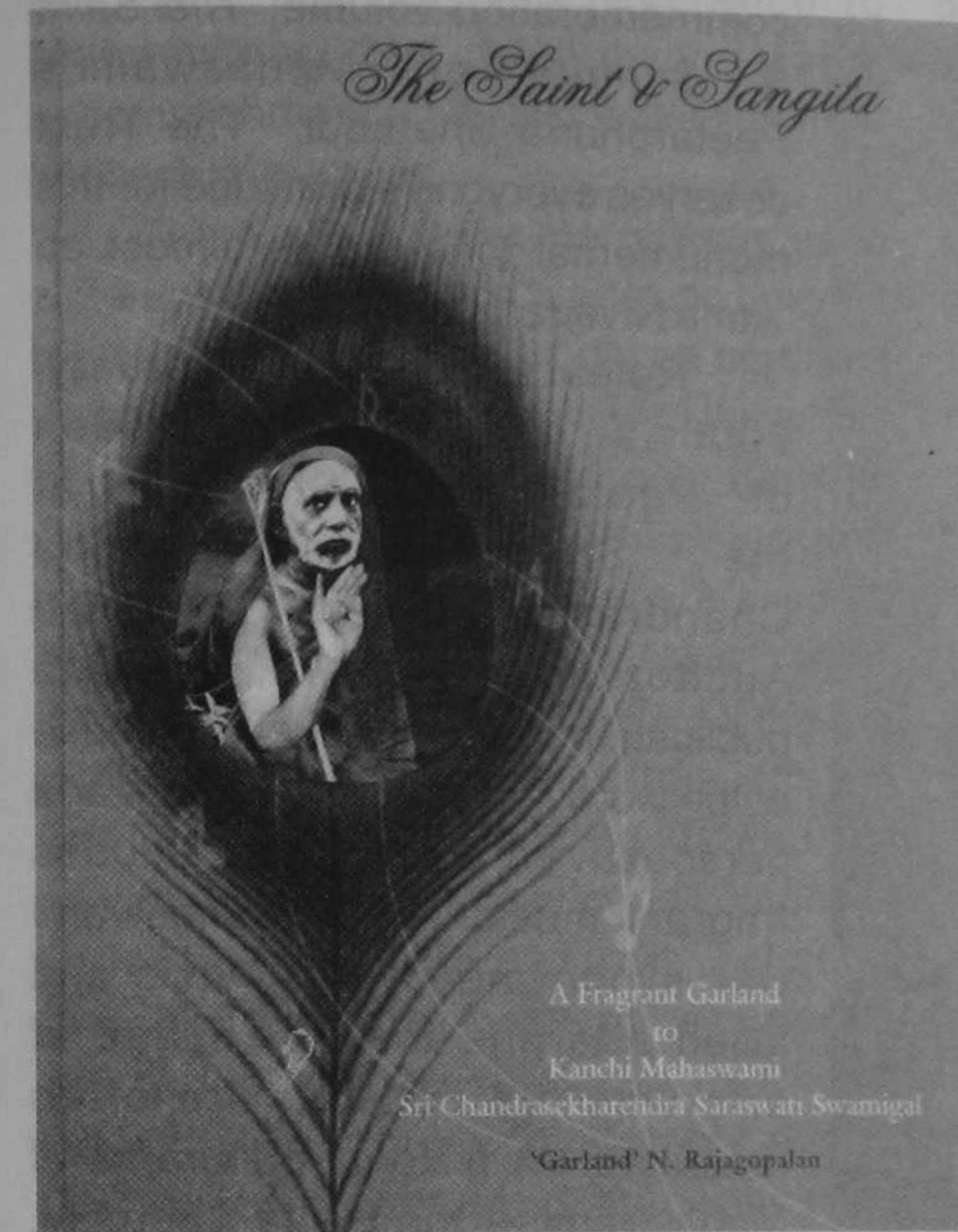
notes and the Tavildar who started his percussion in advance, adopts Khanda Gati (five matras)." That is the rationale behind the time-honoured tradition.

"Have you included *Bhujangathrasitam* in your thesis?" The Mahaswami enquired danseuse Padma Subrahmanyam when she kept her thesis at his feet for his blessings – which astonished the danseuse who had not only included it but had done a thorough study of the Karanas. And, the Saint commissioned her to create a new set of 108 Karanas — not based on those already sculpted in the temples of South India, but to be an inspired version!!

Was it proper to have a new set was a question raised. But Padma taking it as a divine command straightway took the plunge and completed the mission with "inspired devotion and dedication". The monumental testimony is at Uttara Chidambaram temple of Satara.

Was she correct in her designs? How far were they authentic? Were they based on the authority of our Sastraic stipulations? Such question and doubts raised were put to rest as "the proof of her intellectual and artistic conception of the Karanas came in the shape of solid sculptures of 50 Karanas in the world-renowned 9th century archeological monument of Prambanam of Central Java in Indonesia".

Why so long a prelude, you may



wonder! All these essentially speak in a nutshell of Mahaswami's depth of vision, knowledge, multi-faceted splendour and thrust for truth and tradition-based fresh ventures in arts and culture.

He was not one to take anything at the face value, as already noted. His answer for the origin of Saptaswaras reflected his thorough research-bent. What a Gambhira definition for Gambhira Nattai for Mallari! His tracing of certain Ragas such as Kambhoji, Mayamalavagoula, Kannadagoula, Kedaram, Saurashtram etc., to their regional origin was quite amazing, yet authentic. And not for nothing had he commissioned Padma Subrahmanyam to

create a new set of Karanas. Though a staunch traditionalist he was open to changes, where warranted. His plan for the new set had the authority of Bharata, the author of *Natya Sastra*. The sage while laying down rules for the arts also observed that "adepts in the same art could develop themes and forms that would appeal to people according to times." Mahaswami was hailed as the Vidyaranya of the 20th century. To mention *Bhujangathrasitam*, the 24th Karana in the *Natya Sastra*, only one who knew the intricacies of the theory and practice of dance and the relationship between *Natya Sastra* and *Agama Sastra* could do it, said Padma. 'What eminent Vidyaranya, the preceptor and inspirer to the kings of a dynasty, thought of reviving ancient links, an uphill task – was left

incomplete to be taken up by our Mahaswami. Is it not apt to hail him as the Vidyaranya of 20th Century – the inspirer of a new set of Karanas?'

SHANMUKHA ushered the Tamil New Year *Sri Bhava* (April 1994) by letting its readers listen to the "Voice of Divinity" unfolded by a fervent devotee of Paramacharya, 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan in a special Nivedanam. The tribute to the Jagadguru, the "Walking, Divinity on Earth", as a profound thinker, a Saint-seer, 'a reservoir of divine wisdom', a source of music (as music drew soul and vitality in his presence), a musicologist who could sing and whose knowledge of music, why the whole spectrum of fine arts and culture,





commemoration volume, *The Saint & Sangita* on Mahaswami's Peetarohana Shatabdi. The Trust deserves everyone's gratitude for this monumental tone that is almost an 'Atma Nivedanam'.

Released on 13th February, 2006 at the special function of Peetarohana Shatabdi at the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Auditorium, the well got-up publication is saintly in every sense of the word – in concept, content and perspective. Every page exudes fragrant music. That Mahaswami was synonymous with music and allied arts and that patronage of arts was his passion are often reiterated. A pictorial panorama of Mahaswami — the Santa Swaroopi, the compassion personified, taken on

amazed the titans of the world of arts - wafted fragrant music in perspective and presentation.

The author who has strung a series 'Garlands' is a Karmayogi dedicated to his mission of bringing music and allied arts to everyone. The seven-volume-eight series 'Garlands' are a one-man Sadhana, a great yagna, covering a vast spectrum of subjects and themes besides bio-history of composers and musicians — a work of an intellectual deeply dedicated to music, one that is a 'monument' of high thinking and lucid expression.

There could have been thus no better choice than the 'Garlander' for this solemn and sublime task of bringing out this

different venues, dotted with those of musical instruments, through the pages adds to the solemnity as also projects a new dimension of the history and evolution of music through instruments. The primacy given to Veena depicts the Saint as a Vainika.

The author might have taken it as a divine command to bring out this compendium, but in the process of analysing Paramacharya's life mission from various angles - and forays he has drawn copiously and liberally from sources scientific and Sastraic, from Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Bhartruhari's 'Vairayga Satakam' besides from literary musical and patriotic luminaries which only goes

to reveal not only his reverence to Mahaswami but his own 'Maha' accomplishment – his vast collection from intellectual pursuits.

There are quite some references to write-ups in his "Garland" series on relevant topics. Perusing them would be pertinent as one gets a panoramic view of the whole perspective whereas here only the vital facts find coherent and eloquent expression. Of course there are some copious quotes too. It is a massive 'Yagna' the 'Garlander' has performed. Of the two parts he has divided the volume into, the first in his 'Yagna', projecting Mahaswami on various angles. The second comprises collection of articles from artistes, exponents and men of eminence references of which occur in Part I. Nevertheless, they considerably add to the weight, quality and authenticity of the whole effort.

And it should be reiterated to the credit of the author that he does not a wee bit deviate from his main mission i.e. Mahaswami & Music.

Expounding the divine wisdom and purpose of Mahaswami's life in a nutshell, the author writes: "His was one of those rare angelic lives, which practised overtly what it preached. He highlighted a life soaked in spiritual pursuits saturated with all arts - music, dance etc., the finest blend of the spiritual with the cultural. He was an effulgent sun that scattered rays of wisdom on the multi-sided aspects of life."

The very illumined ancestry of Paramacharya traced to Govinda Dikshitar, the Minister of three Naik kings

of Tanjavur, the author of *Sangita Sudha*, and Pitha of Venkatamakhi (the father of Melakartas) bears testimony to the Saint's Sangita Vidwat and Vishranti. And his long stay at Kumbakonam, the then intellectual and cultural capital of the South, when at 13, Swaminathan became the 68th Acharya, had great environmental impact on the Saint. 'Garlander' goes eloquent on the magnificence of the Cities of Kumbakonam and Kanchi which deserves to be quoted :

"If the temple town of Kumbakonam, brimming with literary, musical, dance and other arts and hailed as the 'Citadel of Arts', nurtured the young Peetadhipati's blossoming years, the much celebrated Kanchipuram, the centre of ancient wisdom and teaching and hailed as 'Nagareshu Kanchi', provided the pristine atmosphere for free flowering of the Saint's innate grandeur and matchless qualities of head and heart."

About Paramacharya's solicitous Padayatra to provide solace to the needy and spread the philosophy and culture, the author observed:

"If Sri Adi Sankara covered the noble country to establish his philosophy of Adwaita, Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar for his musical Kshetradana and Sri Vinoba Bhaveji walked likewise to secure lands for the landless (Bhoodan), the Mahaswami was ever on tour not only to spread philosophy of the First of the Gurus and endorse vital virtuous morality, but revive and resuscitate the ancient culture, arts and crafts."

Paramacharya's own narration of



"what life has taught me", extracted from the *Kanchi Kosh*, says the author, "reveals the camphoric mind in getting at the truth and wisdom in each. Simple as each incident would seem to a novice, relating to 'greed, being duped and gain' by shortcuts, each had a lesson and impact on the tender receptive mind of the Saint."

So touching is the Saint's words, an innocent teenager turned into Sanyasi – "My robes of Sanyasa were not the result of any renunciation on my part, nor had I the advantage of living under a Guru for any length of time" that 'Garlander' aptly sums up that "it was the hands of the unbending Destiny that made him the Peetadhipati and sure he was one born with a mission to serve, salvage and lead humanity on the Raja Marga – Adwaita – and he fulfilled with vision, vigour and virtuosity.

The Saint's passion for arts many a time reflected itself in innovation not without sound reasoning of course. If commissioning Dr. Padma to create a new set of Karanas, referred to earlier, was one such Manodharmic forays, here is another:

As all know, it has been a common practice to present Upacharas of dance, music during daily Pujas to the Lord. Once Mahaswami struck on an idea of *Nrityopachara* during his puja to Lord Chandramauleswara at the Math. He asked musician Srivanchiyam Ramachandra Ayyar to do Abhinaya to Sage Patanjali's "Shambhu Natana Ashtakam". The fright and hesitation of the musician who had had no training in dance art, was brushed aside by the saint who advised him to go on with gestures in tune

with the spirit of the sloka. Not only was Ayyar emboldened to do it but did it well too, as Mahaswami certified and he summed up also thus :

"What is the significance of all these? Sruti - Laya, Sangita and Nritya, if practised with dedication and devotion, shall take one to Iswara Sannidhanam. Actually where is it? It is in our devout hearts. How to reach it? Music is one of the chosen tools." The Ashtakam, the Saint says, "gives the details of the formation of the dance and mode of presentation creating an illusion of its being performed before the witness."

Paramacharya went a step further. At 90 plus, the frail-bodied Saint performed, Abhinaya with all Natya Bhavas to Appar Swamigal's Padigam '*Nilai Perumaaru Ennudaiya Nenje Nee Vaa*' from Tiruttaandagam, which he requested Odhuvars who accompanied the Dharmapuram Adheena Matthadipati to render. What a rare occasion for those who assembled at the meet of the two Matthadipatis!

Narrating the memorable event in detail the 'Garlander' weaves : "When Cosmic Dancer Sri Nataraja has thought it fit to present his prowess in dance day in and day out perpetually to inspire succeeding generations, why not His alter ego at Kanchi portray and enlighten the world with the purport, content and significance of at least one song of His Apostle?"

And why this particular Padigam was selected by the Swamiji? "The song has all the ingredients for presenting spiritual Abhinaya in all its perfumed excellence –

It has much food for experts in aesthetics, music, musicology, dance, spiritual science apart from the beautician and the lay..." says the author. The song reproduced with the meaning in English is enlightening.

The great seer that the Mahaswami was, he requested Lalgudi Jayaraman who came for Darshan when he was camping at Suruttapalli (A.P) to come on the next day with Flute, Veena and Mrudangam artistes to sing and play. Need it be said that next day a "musical flock" comprising Lalgudi, flautist Ramani, Vainika Pichumani, Mridangist and disciples reached the place and presented with single-minded devotion, "the Sangita Seva, Sangeetanjali, Sangitaarchana, Sangita Upachara." Listening to the concert, the relaxed Saint asked them to sing a Tevaram and Thiruppugazh. They played and sang "*Naada Bindu Kaladi Namu Namu*" and as they rendered the line "*Deepa Mangala Jyoti Namu Namu*" a lighted Kuthuvilakku was brought and placed before them. With a smile, the Saint alluded to the synchronisation of Sahitya, Sangita and performance! Incidentally the 'Garlander' points out, that day was Kartikai Deepam day and the time - just that hour when the Jyoti is lit up at Tiruvannamalai!

It should be mentioned that Paramacharya never tolerated Padachedam. He was very particular about correct pronunciation even in musical manodharmic enunciation. His very soft correction of the flaw would be a 'loud' reprimand to the musician.

Incidents are aplenty where

Paramacharya lavished his patronage on musicians and musicologists and other artistes and his passion for arts knew no bounds. Not only classical arts but folk arts.

Paramacharya was an expert two-in-one musician too. He could render a Raga in both Carnatic and Hindustani Shailies. He once regaled a small group with Hindolam and Kalyani and their Hindustani counterparts Malkauns and Yaman. Of course, not before asking the group to attempt themselves. He had a sweet melodious voice, says B. N. Sundaram an eminent musicologist who was in the group.

The Saint's thorough knowledge of musicology and its practical enunciation could be perceived from the observations he made regarding Venkatamakhi's Prabandhas. Though they were a great treasure, they were not accessible to all and sundry as only those with a voice with three-octave range could do justice to them! He was conversant with Vaggeyakara Charitras. Any flaw in the text he would certainly point out. One can go on listing instances and events endlessly.

That the Saint of Kanchi was a national non-pareil and an eminent historian too is laced through the pages and a whole chapter is devoted to it. His discourses be it philosophic, literary or cultural have always been an ennobling education. His musical benediction *Maithrim Bhajata* mirrors his universal outlook and solicitude. His vexation at Indian Government approaching other countries with a



begging bowl for which the country is looked down upon and his subtle reprimand reminding us of our glorious culture we have lost sight of, could not have been expressed better :

"Viewed against such a distressing environment to witness foreigners applauding our musicians and dancers and coming forth to learn our art praising them as non-pareil, we can take heart that not only we hold out bowls before others but that we too are in a position to fill other's bowls! It is gratifying to know that this honour and merit accrue to us because of our arts!"

Paramacharya was always spontaneous in blessing, honouring, extending awards to artistes who cherished them as the greatest honour bestowed on them. Instances are many and 'Garlander' narrates in his own lucid, inimitable style, punctuated with quotes, how musical greats such as Ariyakkudi, Semmangudi, Maharajapuram, Madurai Mani Iyer, MS, DKP, Lalgudi, Santhanam, A.K.C. Natarajan and others were patronised and blessed by the saint. There is a chart listing the names of the artistes

and titles conferred on them.

The chapter "One-man Sangita Maha Vidyalaya" (that Paramacharya was) contains gleanings of his definitions of musical terms and messages in fine arts - which are all truly 'Arulvaakku', (Divine Wisdom), one should not miss reading. In fact those who decry musicology as a dry subject and better left untouched or untaught should specially read this to know how easy they make the practical rendition with a 'feel' and understanding.

"Pushpanjali" is truly Sangeetanjali containing songs composed and sung by musicians and artistes. Some of them have already become popular.

The Shatabdi Trust's decision "to take a *Mahaswami Jyoti* from his birthplace Villipuram trailing the path he had taken during his life time ultimately to reach Kanchi, the place of his *Siddhi*" is truly, as 'Garlander' concludes historic.

The solemn tone is a precious treasure which every student of music and library should possess and peruse. □

- **Sulochana Rajendran**

**SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA**

**MUSIC COMPETITION 2005 - 2006 - LIST OF PRIZE WINNERS**

Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Names of the Prize Winners
<b>CARNATIC VOCAL</b>		
1.	<b>B. V. S. Iyengar Memorial</b> (Instituted by M/s. Iyengar & Co.) (For Varnams & Krithis of Trinity) (Age 10 - 15 years)	1st Prize : Kum. Sujanitha Umamaheswaran 2nd Prize : Master. Karthik Suresh 3rd Prize : Kum. R. Vibhooshita : Kum. Bhuvanaja R. Iyengar : Kum. Kanakavalli Santhanam
2.	<b>Smt. Dharmambal Subramanian Endowment</b> (Instituted by Smt. Pasupati) (For Varnams only) (Age 10 - 12 years)	1st Prize : Kum. Sujanitha Umamaheswaran 2nd Prize : Kum. R. Vibhooshita 3rd Prize : Master. Vijay Suresh
3.	<b>Neelambal Jagadeesan Memorial 'Dasarnama'</b> (Instituted by Mrs. Jaya Venkatesan) (Age 10 - 15 years)	1st Prize : Master. Karthik Suresh 2nd Prize : Kum. Abhirami Shankar 3rd Prize : Kum. Bhuvanaja R. Iyengar Proficiency Prizes : Master. Tejasvi S. : Kum. Aishwarya Rajesh : Kum. Chyndhri Padmanabhan : Kum. B. Shobhana
4.	<b>Lakshmi Gopalakrishna Memorial</b>	5 Prizes : Kum. Kanakavalli Santhanam : Kum. Sujanitha Umamaheswaran



Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Names of the Prize Winners
5. i)	<b>Smt. Vijayalakshmi Nathan Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. R. S. Nathan</i> )	1st Prize : Ms. Aparna Suresh
ii)	<b>Smt. N. Lakshmi Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Smt. N. Lakshmi</i> )	: Kum. Aishwarya Rajesh : Kum. R. Vibhooshita : Kum. Sumitra Tatapudy
iii)	<b>Smt. Kalyani Rajamani Endowment</b> (Age 15 - 28 years) (For Raga Alapana, Krithis of Trinity, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras)	
6. i)	<b>Karugudi V. Sankara Iyer Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Sankar Aiyar &amp; Co.</i> )	: 1st Prize : Ms. Archana Venkateswaran
ii)	<b>K. Gopalachari Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. S. K. Iyengar</i> ) (For Papanasam Sivan Krithis - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras ) (Age 16 - 28 years)	
7.	<b>R. V. Murthi Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. R. V. Murthy</i> ) (Age 16 - 28 years) (For Purandaradasa's Songs)	: 1st Prize : Ms. Alur Shweta Srinivasan : 2nd Prize : Ms. Poornima Muralidharan : 3rd Prize : Ms. Sandhya B. : Proficiency Prize : Ms. Archana Venkateswaran

Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Names of the Prize Winners
8. i)	<b>S. R. Kasturi Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. S. R. Kasturi</i> )	: 1st Prize : Ms. Savita Viswanathan
ii)	<b>P. R. Krishnaswamy Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. S. K. Iyengar</i> )	
iii)	<b>Sri. Maharajapuram Santhanam Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust</i> ) (For Tyagaraja Krithis - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16 - 28 years)	
9. i)	<b>T. S. Subramanian Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. T. S. Subramanian</i> )	: 1st Prize : Ms. Poornima Muralidharan
ii)	<b>Alamelu Mangal Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. S. K. Iyengar</i> ) (For Swati Tirunal Krithis - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16-28 years)	
10.	<b>Karuganti Satyavathi Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Prof. K. S. Hanumantha Rao</i> ) (For Any Classical Carnatic Krithi with Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16-28 years)	: 1st Prize : Mr. Jayadev Menon
11.	<b>D. K. Pattammal Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Dr. V. V. Srivatsa</i> ) (For Muthiah Bhagavathar Krithis) (Age 16 - 28 years)	: 1st Prize : Mr. Suraj Venkatachalam : 2nd Prize : Ms. Aparna Suresh

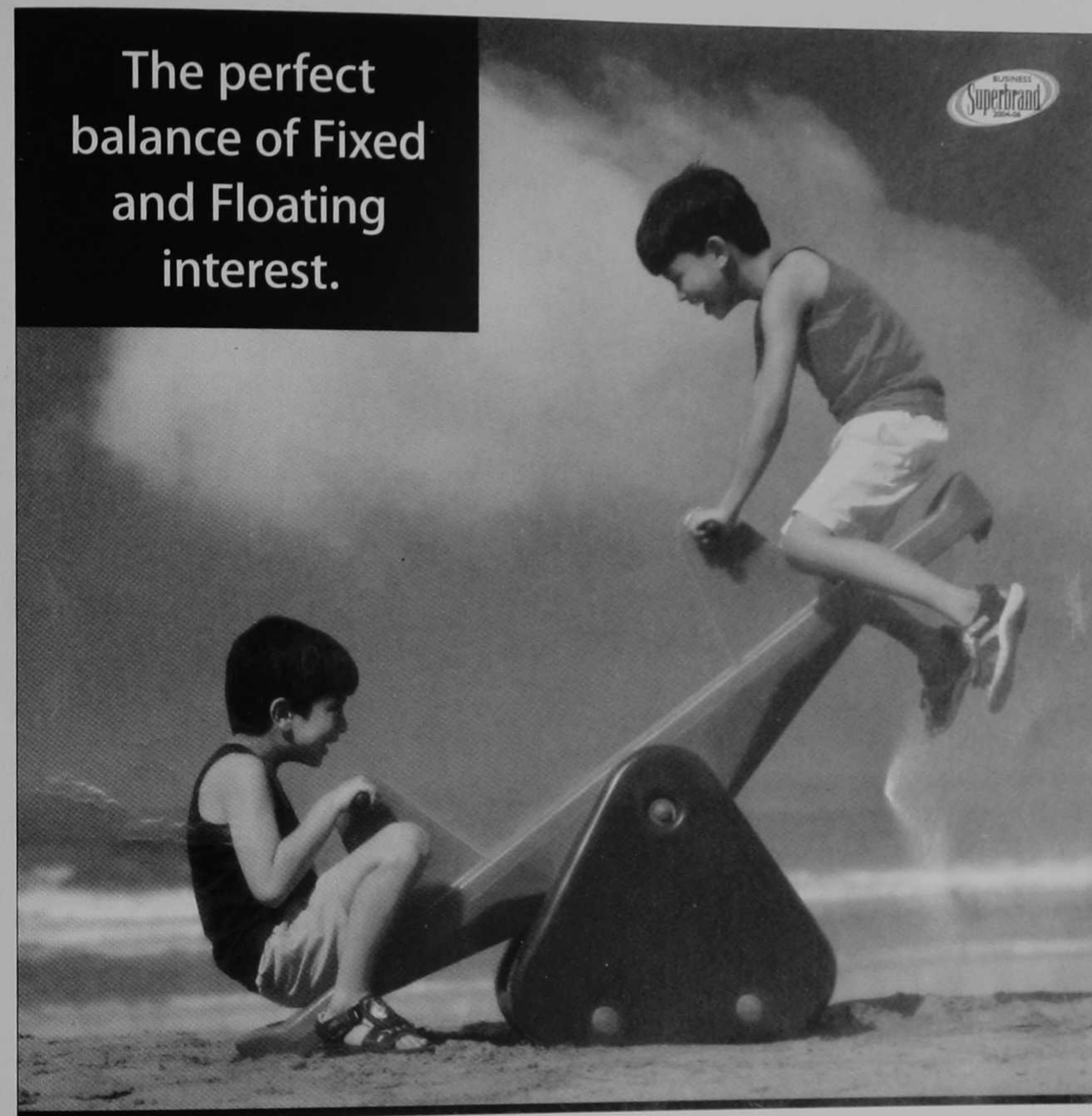


Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	1st Prize	Names of the Prize Winners
12.	<b>D. K. Pattammal Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Dr. V. V. Srivatsa</i> ) (For Muthuswamy Dikshitar Krithis - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16 - 28 years)	1st Prize	Ms. Smrithi Sundararajan
13.	<b>Gayakasikhamani Palghat Anantharaman Bhagavathar Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri T. A. Subramanian</i> ) (Krithis of Tyagaraja, Dikshitar, Swati Tirunal with Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16 - 28 years)	1st Prize	Ms. Smrithi Sundararajan
14. i)	<b>Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust</i> )	1st Prize	Ms. Archana Venkateswaran
ii)	<b>'Karachi' Rajagopalan Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Smt. Lakshmi Rajagopalan</i> ) (For Raga Alapana) (Age 16-28 years)	1st Prize	Ms. Archana Venkateswaran
15.	<b>P. R. Krishnaswamy Iyer Memorial Award</b> (Instituted by <i>Smt. Anuradha Badri</i> ) (For Patnam Subramania Iyer & Mysore Vasudevachar Krithis - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16 - 30 years)	1st Prize	Ms. Savita Viswanathan

Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	1st Prize	Names of the Prize Winners
16.	<b>Navalpakkam Sunder Rajan Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. N. Sunder Rajan</i> ) (For Syama Sastri Krithis - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16 - 28 years)	1st Prize	Ms. Savita Viswanathan
17.	<b>Latha Sunder Rajan Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. N. Sunder Rajan</i> ) (For Swarajathis of Syama Sastri) (Age 16 - 28 years)	1st Prize	Mr. Jayadev Menon
18.	<b>D. K. Pattammal Award of Excellence</b> (Instituted by <i>Smt. Nithyashree Mahadevan</i> ) (For Varnams & Any Major Classical Krithi - Raga Alapana, Krithi, Niraval & Kalpana Swaras) (Age 16 - 28 years)	1st Prize	Master. Tejasvi S.
19.	<b>Warrier Foundation - Prize</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. Ramkumar Warrier</i> ) (For Swathi Tirunal Krithis) (Age 10 - 16 years)	1st Prize	Master. Tejasvi S.
20.	<b>CARNATIC VIOLIN</b> Group - I	1st Prize	Kum. Shweta Kannan



Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Names of the Prize Winners
i)	<b>G. Lakshmi Ammal Memorial</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. G. Sundaresan</i> )	Kum. Chyndhri Padmanabhan
ii)	<b>Smt. Mangalam Govindaswamy Endowment</b> (Instituted by <i>Shri. T. S. Krishnaswamy</i> ) (For Varnams and Krithis) (Age 10 -15 years)	
<b><u>HINDUSTANI VOCAL</u></b>		
21.	<b>Group - I</b> (Age 10 - 15 years)	1st Prize : Kum. Surabhi Bhate 2nd Prize : Kum. M. M. Manasi 3rd Prize : Master. Kaustubh Mule
22.	<b>Group - III</b> (Age 20 years and above)	1st Prize : Ms. Asmita M. Gokhale
<b><u>HINDUSTANI TABLA</u></b>		
23.	<b>Group - I</b>	1st Prize : Master. Mihir P. Wairkar Master. Siddharth N. Padiyar



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